

Enhancing Early Care and Education



Research to Practice

WHAT WE KNOW¹:

- Center-based child care program quality in Kentucky is average, but improving since the implementation of the KIDS NOW Initiative.
 - Quality is lower in centers that serve large number of children who live in poverty.
 - Quality is lower in infant/toddler classrooms than in preschool classrooms.
 - *Preschool* classrooms that serve children with disabilities have *higher* quality than those who do not. *Infant/Toddler* classrooms that serve children with disabilities have *lower* quality than those who do not.
- Knowledge and participation in early care and education components of KIDS NOW are positively related to overall center quality.
- Parents who have their children in programs that participate in the KIDS NOW Initiative are more likely to engage their children in educationally relevant activities at home.
- Administrators in early care and education programs who are involved in KIDS NOW have higher staff participation in components of KIDS NOW and they perceive greater benefits of the Initiative.
- While the quality of care in rural and urban programs is similar, staff in rural programs are better educated, more familiar with the **KIDS NOW**, and have more positive perceptions of the Initiative than their urban counterparts.

WHAT WE NEED TO DO:

- **Higher Education and Training/Technical Assistance Entities**
 - Design and implement creative options in the delivery of professional development for child care providers. Specifically, professional development opportunities **need to** be offered at times and locations compatible with providers' work schedules.
 - Focus training and technical assistance efforts on *how* to teach young children. In preschool classrooms, the emphasis should be on designing and implementing developmentally appropriate activities across curricular areas (e.g., math, science, art), ensuring that those activities promote an understanding and acceptance for diversity. In infant/toddler classrooms, the emphasis should be on designing and implementing play experiences that promote development in all areas (e.g., motor, sensory) and are culturally appropriate.
 - Emphasize strategies for how to accommodate the needs of young children with disabilities in community based child care.
 - Target programs that serve large number of children who live in poverty. Provide training to child care providers in those centers on how to work with families who have multiple challenges. Support teachers to deal with the unique needs of these children, especially their social/emotional needs.

¹ KIDS NOW Evaluation Report 2002-03. University of Kentucky and University of Louisville.

Child Care Directors

- Consider career ladders as well as other professional incentives that would support the staff to stay with programs once they advance in their education. Examples might include wage increases based on STARS incentives or increases in child care subsidy rates.
- Use similar strategies to support staff to stay with programs that serve large numbers of children who live in poverty in and effort to reduce turnover in those programs.
- Participate in the Director's Credential program, Director's workshops/seminars, and Director's Dial-A-Discussion, now available throughout the state.
- Share benefits of participating in STARS for KIDS NOW with other directors. Present these benefits at state and regional conferences at which other child care directors attend. Discuss strategies for overcoming any barriers to participation.
- Assist staff as they implement new teaching strategies they have learned in professional development activities.
- Work with staff to develop individual professional growth plans and support implementation of that plan.



Child Care Providers

- Access the KIDS NOW scholarship program to increase your knowledge about how children learn and develop, and learn new skills to improve the daily curriculum for the young children with which you work.
- Seek available resources for serving infants and toddlers with specific challenges including those with disabilities and those who live in poverty. Resources include Infant/Toddler technical assistance providers, mental health specialists, and First Steps providers.
- Share information with families about quality child care and ways they can enhance their child's development at home. Access available resources for doing so such as *Keys to Great Parenting*.
- Work with the director to develop a professional growth plan that will enable you to grow professionally.

Professional Resources:

- Buyse, V. & Wesley, P.W. (2004). Stage by stage: A framework for understanding the consultation process. *Young Exceptional Children*, vol. 7, p. 2.
- Capezzuto, S.M., Da-Ros-Voseles, D.A. (2001). Using experts to enhance classroom projects. *Young Children*, vol.56, p. 84.
- Childress, D.C. (2004). Special instruction and natural environments. *Infants & Young Children: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Special Care Practices*, vol. 17, p. 162.
- Cianciolo, S., Trueblood-Noll, R., Allingham, P. (2004). Health consultation in early childhood settings. *Young Children*, vol. 59, p. 56.
- Crais, E.R., Boone, H.A., Harrison, M., Freund, P., Downing, K., West, T. (2004). Interdisciplinary personnel preparation. *Infants & Young Children: An*

Interdisciplinary Journal of Special Care Practices, vol. 17, p. 82.

Duke, N.K. (2003). Reading to learn from the very beginning: Information books in early childhood. *Young Children*, vol.58, p. 14.

Dever, M.T., Burts, D.C. (2002). Using family literacy bags to enhance family involvement. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, vol.30, p.16.

Freeman, N.K. (2001). Early childhood education: Tools for becoming a profession. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, vol.29, p.11.

Hesse, P., Lane, F. (2003). Media literacy starts young: An integrated curriculum approach. *Young Children*, vol.58, p. 20.

Knapp-Philo, J., Corso, R.M., Brekken, L.J., Heal, H.B. (2004). Training to make and sustain change. *Infants & Young Children: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Special Care Practices*, vol. 17, p. 171.

Lee, G.L. (2002). Three strategies to promote young children's literacy development. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, vol.30, p.27.

McCoy, M.K. (2003). Language, math, social studies, and... Worms?: Integrating the early childhood curriculum. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, vol. 31, p. 3.

Neuharth-Pritchett, S., Reguero de Atilas, J., Park, B. (2003). Using integrated curriculum to connect standards and developmentally appropriate practice. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, vol.31, p. 13.

Pierce, J.C. & Terry, K. (2001). Developing oral language in the early childhood classroom: Children as storytellers. *Kaleidoscope*, vol.16, p. 11.

Rapport, M.J.K., McWilliam, R.A., Smith, B.J. (2004). Practices across disciplines in early childhood. *Infants & Young Children: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Special Care Practices*, vol.17, p. 32.

Warner, L. (2003). Planning effective classroom discovery centers. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, vol. 31, p. 22.

Wasik, B.A. (2001). Teaching the alphabet to young children. *Young Children*, vol.56, p. 34.

For Regional Training Centers and Information :

Go to the Kentucky Dept. of Education Website at:
www.education.ky.gov/KDE
click on Early Childhood

Also you can locate links of interest from this website:
www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Early+Childhood+Development/Early+Childhood+Development+-+Links+of+Interest.htm

Or call the KDE- Division of Early Childhood:

1-800-533-5372

Additional Website Information:

Professional Development:
www.nccic.org/pubs/goodstart/selected-res-prof-dev.pdf

Research:
<http://childcareresearch.org>

Partnerships:
www.nccic.org/quilt/

Child Care Development Fund:
www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/geninfo/ccdfdesc.htm

